

Facts on Virginia

FACTS ON VIRGINIA

Capitol Building, Richmond



Photo courtesy of the Governor's Office

The cornerstone for the Virginia Capitol Building was laid on August 18, 1785; the building was completed in 1792. Modeled after the Maison Carree at Nimes, France, the Capitol was the first public building in the United States to be built using the Classical Revival style of architecture. Thomas Jefferson designed the central section of the Capitol, its most outstanding feature being the interior dome, which is undetectable from the exterior; the wings were added in 1906 to house the Senate and House of Delegates. In 2007, in time to receive the Queen of England during the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown Settlement, the Capitol underwent an extensive restoration, renovation and expansion, including the addition of a state of the art Visitor's Center that will ensure that it remains a working capital well into the 21st Century. More information on the Capitol building can be found at <http://www.virginiacapitol.gov>

Virginia was named for Queen Elizabeth I of England, the "Virgin Queen." Virginia is also known as the "Old Dominion." King Charles II of England gave it this name in appreciation of Virginia's loyalty to the crown during the English Civil War of the mid-1600s. The first permanent English settlement in America was established at Jamestown in 1607; in 1619, the Jamestown colonists established the first representative legislature in America. Virginia entered the Union on June 25, 1788, the tenth state to do so. Virginia and the following three states are designated as Commonwealths: Kentucky, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. The Virginia state capitol is the second oldest working capitol in the United States, having been in continuous use since 1788.

The following eight U.S. Presidents were born in Virginia: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, Zachary Taylor, and Woodrow Wilson, giving Virginia the nickname the "Mother of Presidents."

Virginia is also known as the "Mother of States." All or part of the following eight states were formed from western territory once claimed by Virginia: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Virginia is home to the country's largest port, Hampton Roads, and the second oldest college in America, The College of William and Mary, founded 1693 in Williamsburg. Virginia's Natural Wonders include the Natural Bridge, Natural Chimneys, Natural Tunnel, and Luray Caverns.

FACTS ON VIRGINIA

Statewide Statistics:

Population.....8,001,024
Rank in Country..... 12th
Density per Square Mile 202

Land Area (Square Miles)39,490
Rank in Country..... 36th

Capital City..... Richmond
Population.....204,451
Rank in State 4th

Number of Counties 95
Number of Independent Cities 39
Number of Incorporated Towns..... 190

Congressional Delegation:

U.S. Senators..... 2
U.S. Representatives 11
Electoral College Votes..... 13

State Legislature:

Senators..... 40
Delegates..... 100

Ten Largest Counties:

Fairfax.....1,081,726
Prince William.....404,002
Chesterfield.....316,236
Loudoun.....312,311
Henrico306,935
Arlington.....207,627
Stafford.....128,961
Spotsylvania.....122,397
Hanover99,863
Albemarle94,970

Ten Largest Cities:

Virginia Beach.....437,994
Norfolk.....242,803
Chesapeake222,209
Richmond.....204,214
Newport News180,719
Alexandria.....139,966
Hampton137,436
Roanoke97,032
Portsmouth.....95,535
Suffolk84,585

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Official Emblems and Symbols:

State Flower	Dogwood Blossom	State Beverage	Milk
State Tree	Dogwood	State Folk Dance.....	Square Dance
State Bird	Cardinal	State Insect.....	Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly
State Dog.....	American Foxhound	State Fossil.....	Chesapacten Jeffersonius
State Fish.....	Brook Trout	State Motto.....	<i>Sic Semper Tyrannis</i> (Thus Always to Tyrants)
State Shell	Oyster	State Bat.....	Virginia Big Eared Bat